WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method for delivering a parcel to a secure receptacle at a location, comprising the steps

2   of:

3   (a) carrying the parcel to the location;

4   (b) accessing the secure receptacle;

5   (c) placing the parcel within the secure receptacle;

6   (d) resecuring the secure receptacle; and

7   (e) automatically registering the placement of the parcel within the secure receptacle after

8   the resecuring step.

2   2.   The method as in claim 1, including the additional steps of:

     reading a code on the parcel in response to the resecuring step; and

3   storing the code in a memory.

3   3.   The method as in claim 1, including the additional steps of:

2   accessing a remote location by a communication link; and

3   conveying the placement data to the remote location;

4   wherein the registering step is in response to the resecuring step.

1   4.   The method as in claim 1, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state and an

2   unlocked state, and wherein the accessing step includes the additional step of:

3   moving from the locked state to the unlocked state in response to an authorized identifier.

1   5.   The method as in claim 4, wherein the authorized identifier is received from at least one

2   of: a magnetic strip card, a key pad, and a smart card.

1   6.   The method as in claim 1, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state and an

2   unlocked state, and ~~wherein the resecuring step includes the additional step of:~~

3   moving from the unlocked state to the locked state after receiving the parcel.

7.   The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the accessing step.

1   ~~8.   The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry in~~

2   response to the resecuring step.

9.   The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the registering step.

1   10.   The method as in claim 1, where in the placing step is performed at night.

1   ~~11.   A method for shipping a parcel from~~ a secure receptacle at a location, comprising the

2   steps of:

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3   (a) arriving at the location of the secure receptacle;

4   (b) accessing the secure receptacle;

5   (c) removing the parcel from the secure receptacle; and

6   (d) registering the removal of the parcel from the secure receptacle after the removing

7 step wherein the registering step is in response to the removing step.

1   12.   The method as in claim 11, including the additional steps of:

2   (a) labeling the parcel in preparation for shipping;

3   (b) placing the parcel in the secure receptacle; and

4   (c) notifying a carrier of the placement of the parcel within the secure receptacle after the

5 placing step and prior to the arriving step.

1   13.   The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of securing the secure receptacle

2   after placing the parcel in the secure receptacle.

1   14.   The method as in claim 12, wherein the labeling step includes the steps of:

2   generating a code containing recipient information; and

3   affixing the code on the parcel.

1   15.   The method as in claim 12, wherein the notifying step includes the step of transmitting

2   the placement data to the remote location by a communication link.

1   16.   The method as in claim 12, wherein the notifying step includes the steps of: accessing a

2   remote location by a communication link; and conveying placement data to the remote

3   location.

1   17.   The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of dispatching a courier to the

2   location of the secure receptacle in response to the notifying step.

1   18.   The method as in claim 12, including the additional step selected from the group of

2   electronically measuring the parcel dimensions and

electronically measuring the parcel weight.

19.   The method as in claim 11, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state and an

unlocked state, wherein the accessing step includes the additional step of:

moving from the locked state to the unlocked state in response to an authorized identifier.

20.   The method as in claim 19, wherein the authorized identifier is received from an access

2   device.

1   21.   The method as in claim 19, wherein the authorized identifier is received from at least one

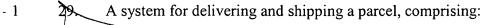2   of: a magnetic strip card, a key pad, and a smart card.

1   22.   The method as in claim 11, wherein the parcel has a code, including the additional steps

2   of:

3   reading the code on the parcel during the removing step; and

4   storing the code in a memory.

1   23.   The method as in claim 11, wherein the registering step includes the steps of:

2   accessing a remote location by a communication link;

3   conveying the removal data to the remote location.

1   24.   The method as in claim 11, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the accessing step.

1   25.   The method as in claim 11, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the registering step.

1   26.   The method as in claim 13, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the securing step.

1   27.   The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of generating a log entry in

2   response to the notifying step.

1   28.   The method as in claim 11, wherein the removing step is performed at night.

- 1   29.   A system for delivering and shipping a parcel, comprising:

2   a secure receptacle for receiving the parcel;

3   a scanner positioned within the secure receptacle to scan information on the parcel; and

4   a communication device connected to the output of the scanner.

1   30.   The system as in claim 29, wherein the secure receptacle further comprises:

2   a platform for holding the parcel;

3   a door for selectively providing access to the platform; and

4   a lock for securing the door when the door is closed.

1   31.   The system as in claim 30, wherein the lock secures the door in response to the door

        closing.

2   32.   The system as in claim 30, further comprising an access device wherein the lock is

        released in response to a signal from the access device.

1   33.   The system as in claim 32, wherein the access device is configured to receive at least one

2   of: a magnetic strip card, a code from a key pad, and a smart card and issues the signal in

3   response to the magnetic strip card reader, the code from the key pad, and the smart card.

1   34.   The system as in claim 29, wherein the communication device transmits the information

-2   received from the scanner to a remote location in response to the lock securing the door.

1   35.   The system as in claim 29, further comprising a button connected to the communication

2   device for initiating a communication to a remote location.

1   36.   The system as in claim 29, further comprising a scale for registering the weight of the

2   parcel.

37.   The system as in claim 29, further comprising a ruler for registering the dimension of the

       parcel.

38.   The system as in claim 29, wherein the secure receptacle has a waterproof shell.